



Chairman Welborn and Members of the Committee-

My name is Jerry Davis. I am a board member of the Montana Bowhunters Association and I represent them for this testimony.

MBA opposes this HB 198 because of the negative impacts a late season will have on Montana's populations of deer and elk. These seasons would focus hunting in areas where deer and elk are on their winter ranges, both public and private lands. Right now hunting seasons are set to end in December to help big-game herds deal with the rigors of surviving winter. Letting people harass elk during the vulnerable winter-to-early spring period will only add stress to pregnant elk and deer and subsequently have negative impacts on fawn and calf recruitment.

This bill would allow anyone with an unused license to hunt deer and or elk. During this proposed late hunting season deer and elk will be more concentrated on winter ranges. A potentially large hunter base hunting in areas with concentrated deer and elk populations will lead to significant hunting pressure and herd harassment and quite possibly the old Yellowstone firing line mentality. Quite possibly the deer and elk will be pushed from their historic winter ranges at precisely the time they need these wintering ranges to survive.

We already have a problem with predation of deer and elk during the winter by wolves and lions. To add a large number of hunters to the rigors of winter would be poor management of our wildlife.

Help conserve Montana's wildlife resource and vote against this bill.

Thank you.